

The Uptown String Quartet



"This quartet is on the verge of a genuine artistic breakthrough."

Chip Stern, Musician



Maxine Roach with her father, legendary percussionist Max Roach.

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The Uptown String Quartet is everything you wouldn't expect a string quartet to be.

The difference lies mainly in the quartet's approach and choice of material, and they perform with an eclectic style all their own. On the debut recording *Max Roach Presents The Uptown String Quartet*, they bring a magnetic blend of cohesion, expressive warmth and energy to a host of marvelously conceived pieces. Skilled improvisers and polished ensemble players, they traverse a tremendous range of music and they match their expansive techniques and subtle dynamic shades to the demands of each piece. "Let Us Break Bread Together" is marked by lovely lyrical shadings and buoyant episodes, and "Tricotism" by its driving urgency that is mesmerizing in its complexity. Maxine's arrangement of "Extensions," with

its brilliant percussive energy, was nominated for a Grammy Award.

"The music we play makes the quartet hard to label," says Diane. "We might actually change the tradition of having so many different musical categories."

A direct outgrowth of the Max Roach Double Quartet, the legendary percussionist and composer is the driving force behind the group. "I brought together this quartet about 10 years ago," says Max. "I wanted to bring strings into the forefront and I wanted a female string quartet to play alongside my regular quartet."

Violinist Diane Monroe graduated from the Philadelphia Musical Academy and the Curtis Institute and has been a member of the faculty at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Swarthmore College.

Violinist Lesa Terry received her music degree from the California State University at Northridge, was a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and a recipient of the Outstanding Young Women of America Award.

Max's daughter, violist Maxine Roach, received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and won a scholar-

ship to pursue graduate studies with the distinguished violist William Primrose.

Cellist Eileen M. Folson appeared as a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the age of 17 and received her masters degree from the University of Michigan.

The Quartet has appeared on the television programs "CBS Nightwatch," "The Today Show," "The Eleventh Hour," and the WGBH program "Say Brother."

"As the quartet moves more and more into improvisation, each of us can be more expressive in a more personal way," says Eileen. "We really are blazing a new path," says Lesa. "We cater to a diversity of musical tastes which I think demonstrates the variety of the quartet's stylistic scope."

A dynamic ensemble with a distinctive personality...
The Uptown String Quartet...bristling with energy!!!



Maxine Roach
Violist

Lesa Terry
Violinist

Eileen M. Folson
Cellist

Diane Monroe
Violinist

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"With material spanning old-time spirituals, stately rags, rippling blues, snaky BeBop and tone-row classicism, the foursome matched their expansive techniques and subtle dynamic shades to each of the piece's demands. The Uptown String Quartet cut through with bracing astringency."

Gene Santoro—*New York Post*,

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"These four young classically trained musicians have unmistakable authenticity all their own which catapults string playing, jazz, classical and any other genre to a new plateau."

Jam Sessions

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"BEST STRING GROUP"
1990 *JazzTimes* Critics Poll



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THE UPTOWN STRING QUARTET
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"The Uptown String Quartet's music offers hope that there are still untapped options for Jazz musicians."

The Commercial Appeal—
Memphis

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"The members of the Uptown String Quartet are classical musicians who have an affinity for and decided proficiency in jazz. Traditionally, strings in jazz have been relegated to mere sweetening...but on its debut disc, the group sets that tradition on its ear, taking center stage in a delicious mix of rag, blues, old-time Americana, jazz and pre-jazz."

Susan Elliott—*Vis-a-Vis*



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